

While much remains to be done to achieve equal opportunity that is more than just a phrase or slogan we can still take pride in the stunning achievements made by so many African-Americans that has often been overlooked in our recorded history.

These contributions have covered the spectrum of cultural, economic, political, and scientific advances that are widely heralded and well known, but many others, less publicized, have equal significance to society.

African-Americans comprise about 12 percent of our population and are our largest minority group. We need but look around us, in our workplace, in entertainment, sports, politics, religion, sciences, education, and throughout our daily lives to understand the importance of their accomplishments.

I realize that the celebration of Black History Month has origins that go back much farther than the formal program we celebrate today which originated in 1976. It was Dr. Carter G. Woodson, who in 1926 first began setting aside a period of time in February to recall the now voluminous heritage, achievements, and contributions of African-Americans.

Singling out any one person or achievement without also giving equal acknowledgment to the many others of equal fame or public acknowledgment would not do justice to the rich history of one of our Nation's most important minority groups.

I join all Americans in saluting Black History Month 1996.

TRIBUTE TO RODNEY SLATER

HON. EARL F. HILLIARD

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 1996

Mr. HILLIARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Mr. Rodney Slater, President Clinton's Federal Highway Administrator. Recently, Mr. Slater was of great assistance to the small rural community of Gee's-Bend, AL, in authorizing a new ferryboat to replace the one dismantled by segregationists in 1962 in order to keep many civil rights protesters from easily crossing the Alabama River to march in the streets of Camden for their freedom.

Mr. Slater and his staff at the Federal Highway Administration actually understood the need of these citizens to help transport their families across the Alabama River to the county seat of Wilcox County in Camden, AL, in a timely manner. Rather than acting like an impersonal bureaucratic machine, Mr. Slater's office responded with kindness and understanding.

Since 1962, the predominately African-American citizens of Gee's-Bend have had to travel over 1 hour, each way, to visit their doctor, hospital, bank, and for their children to attend the public schools of the county due to the closing of the ferryboat.

However, the arduous journey of these good people will soon be shortened from over 1 hour each way, to only 10 minutes each way, due to the wisdom of Administrator Slater. Mr. Slater took such an interest as to personally visit the proposed site of the new ferry to ensure that the project was needed and worthy of our taxpayers' support.

President Clinton should be commended in selecting such an upstanding man of honor,

integrity, and fairplay as Mr. Slater. He is a friend of all lovers of freedom, democracy, and equality.

TRIBUTE TO OCEAN COUNTY FREEHOLDER JAMES J. MANCINI

HON. JIM SAXTON

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 1996

Mr. SAXTON. It is an honor and a privilege to pay tribute to my good friend, Ocean County Freeholder and long-time mayor of Long Beach Township, James J. Mancini.

Freeholder Jim Mancini, as chairman of the Ocean County Office on Aging, serves the largest senior population in the State of New Jersey. Ocean County's nutrition sites, transportation programs for the elderly, and senior outreach programs are considered among the finest in our State. Freeholder Mancini has worked closely with me through the years in our effort to preserve and protect such programs as Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. His support has been invaluable.

As liaison to the Ocean County Library Commission, Freeholder Mancini has worked tirelessly to expand the system to 17 branches throughout the county.

A former member of New Jersey's General Assembly, he continues to serve as mayor of Long Beach Township, a position he has held for 28 years. This dedicated public servant also serves as chairman of the board of Southern Ocean County Hospital and as vice president of the Long Beach Island, St. Francis Community Center. The civic associations to which he has devoted many hours are too numerous to mention.

All these associations and activities were carried out while always putting his wife, Madeline, and their nine children first.

The residents of Long Beach Township pay him a great tribute by dedicating their municipal facility in his honor and name.

Jim Mancini represents what is so very good about our country—he is an honorable man, a family man, a man who is willing to go the extra mile for what is right. He has proven the point of the old saying, "If you want something done, give the job to a busy person."

I offer him my personal thanks and the gratitude of all those he has so faithfully served throughout the years.

As he celebrates his 70th birthday among family and friends, I wish him all the best that life can offer.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM D. SHAW

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 1996

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today to ask that you and my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives join me in paying tribute to Dr. William D. Shaw.

Dr. Shaw is being honored by his many family members and friends on March 2, 1996, for his 33 years of service and dedication to the field of education. Dr. Shaw began his career in 1962 as a teacher in the Concord Pub-

lic School District of Michigan. He continued in numerous teaching and administrative positions in Concord before moving on to East Lansing, MI, where he became an instructor at Michigan State University. In 1974 he joined the staff of Bedford Public Schools as director of instruction. Fortunately, in 1978 he moved to the Swartz Creek community schools. During his years of serving the students of Swartz Creek he held the positions of assistant superintendent for instruction and assistant superintendent for instruction and business operations. Dr. Shaw has maintained an involvement in his profession through membership in numerous county and State associations. Additionally, he has served as an adjunct lecturer at both Michigan State University and Central Michigan University.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and all my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Dr. William D. Shaw on his retirement from 33 years to the field of education and wish he and his wife Mary the very best in retirement.

SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO GERALD "JERRY" PROPHET

HON. JAMES A. BARCIA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 1996

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize one of Michigan's most distinguished and devoted police officers. Sgt. Gerald "Jerry" Prophet is retiring from the Michigan State Police on February 29, 1996, after 24 years of commitment to preserve the safety of the citizens of Michigan. He is being honored for his exceptional service on March 2, 1996, at the Candlelight Banquet Center in Bridgeport, MI.

Sergeant Prophet was born in Heflin, AL, on July 31, 1947. His family moved to Michigan when he was a young boy and he graduated from Ferndale High School in 1965. Jerry joined the Michigan State Police in 1972 and rose to the rank of sergeant. He always places protecting the citizens of Michigan over himself which is a tribute to his honorable service. His dedication to the needs of the people of Michigan and his fellow officers earned him the thanks and respect he so much deserves.

An example of his dedication and one of the most notable aspects of his career was when he received a life saving award from the Michigan State Police. Jerry responded to an urgent call and rushed to the home of a Michigan citizen who stopped breathing. He performed CPR and ultimately saved her life.

Despite his demanding schedule, Jerry is also committed to the spirituality of his community. He serves on the usher board and is a member of the men's club and the courtesy committee at Bethel AME Church in Saginaw.

Sergeant Prophet not only served the people of Michigan, but served his country as well. Before joining the Michigan State Police, he served in the Navy and was stationed in China Lake, CA, and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. He was honorably discharged from the Navy in 1970 with the rank of yeoman 2d class.

Never losing sight of the importance of education and learning, Sergeant Prophet received an associate degree from Delta College in 1978 and is expected to graduate with